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LIGHTER COLOR, LACK OF ODOR IDENTIFY NEW SHRIMP ON MARKET

Shrimp fanciers need have no qualms about eating the pinkish, tan-colored fresh and frozen shrimp now being widely distributed throughout the country, the Fish and Wildlife Service advised today. They are not spoiled common shrimp.

The pinkish, tan-colored shrimp are an infrequently-found species known as "grooved" or "brown" or "Brazilian" shrimp. During the past season, they have been caught in unusually vast quantities in the Gulf of Mexico, particularly by Texas fishermen, Ralph Russell, chief of the Market Development Section in the Service's Branch of Commercial Fisheries, said.

Ordinarily, the grooved shrimp comprise about five percent of the total shrimp catch in this country. Because they have always been cooked and canned, or consumed locally near the point of landing, grooved shrimp in fresh form have never been widely known.

The increased demand for fresh and frozen shrimp over the canned variety and the heavier landings of grooved shrimp in Gulf States fishing centers account for their current overflow on the market.

Because of their pinkish tinge, the grooved shrimp have been mistaken for spoiled common shrimp. In raw form, common shrimp are a greenish-gray. When spoiled, they lose their light color and acquire a bright pinkish tint, not unlike the normal color of raw grooved shrimp.

C. Howard Baltzo, Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, explains that the grooved shrimp can be definitely identified by their translucent, brownish tone, which is darker than the color of common shrimp when spoiled. Besides, spoiled shrimp can be recognized by a foul odor, which grooved shrimp do not have.

Mr. Baltzo, who was active in Gulf of Mexico shrimp investigations for four years, says that the taste and food value of grooved shrimp is identical to that of common shrimp. The size and life histories of both species of shrimp, their appearance after cooking, and the amount of cooking time required are also the same.

In fact, Mr. Baltzo states, grooved shrimp keep better for longer periods of time because of their firmer meat.

The grooved shrimp get their name from the grooves on the back of their heads. In marketed form, the heads are removed from all shrimp. The difference in color, which is actually insignificant, is therefore the only difference between the grooved and common shrimp.